

D-754

Wheatley's United Methodist Church

Galestown vicinity

Public worship

1784, 1879-80

The history of Wheatly's United Methodist Church west of Galestown dates back to the post Revolutionary War year of 1784, making it the oldest congregation in the Fork election district. While the oral tradition of the congregation dates the extant structure to the time of the congregation's founding, the only possible remnant of that building is the standing framework, which has internally exposed corner posts that have been covered over by late nineteenth and twentieth century materials. Also indicated by projecting posts is the size and position of a former gallery that stretched across the south end. The Victorian era repairs executed in 1879-80 include a pressed metal interior sheathing that covers the ceiling and a portion of the walls above a late twentieth century application of paneling. The nineteenth century remodeling is referred to in a private letter between George E. Wheatley and Irvin S. R. Wheatley from March 30, 1879 which states that the congregation decided to repair the old church at that time rather than build a new structure which had been contemplated. The colored glass windows and Victorian altar rail and furniture clearly date from that time as well.

Erected on a lot of land bordering the plantations of Edward and Ezekial Wheatley, the church parcel also edged the land of William and Sarah Fletcher, who conveyed any right, title and claim that they had to the property to trustees Laban Jones, Solomon Russell, William Deane, James Fletcher, George Mezsick, Edward Wheatley, Charles Deane, Nathan Bradley & Nathan McCollister in 1798. The terms of the

indenture state the bounds of the one-acre lot referencing "Edward Wheatlys Chappel"
and the stipulations that

...the intent and Express purpose of building a Preaching house or Chappell thereon for the use of the Methodist preachers or friendly Clergy of the Church of England and that the said trustees and survivors of them and trustees for the time being do and shall from time to time and all time forever hereafter permit such persons as shall be appointed at the yearly Conference of the people called Methodist Held in America to preach and Expound Gods Holy Word and no others to have and enjoy said premises for the purpose afsd provided always, that the preachers preach no other Doctrine then (sic) is contained in Mr. John Wesleys Notes upon the New Testament and four volumes of sermons...

The Wheatley's Methodist Episcopal congregations maintained meetings through the nineteenth century, although the denomination changed to a Methodist Protestant persuasion, which is documented by incorporation papers dated to October 1907. The trustees at that time were Caleb N. Stack, William E. Dukes, Oliver G. Truitt, William J. Marine, Jesse R. Wheatley, and Rigby W. Wheatley. During the early twentieth century the congregation financed the construction of a single story church hall on the property, which is unconnected to the historic building. Over the course of the past twenty years the congregation has dwindled to the point that only commemorative services are held occasionally.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-754

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Wheatley's Methodist Church, Wheatley's M. P. Church, Edward Wheatley's Chapel
other Wheatley's United Methodist Church

2. Location

street and number Wheatley's Church Road ☐ not for publication
city, town Galestown ☒ vicinity
county Dorchester

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of Wheatley's Methodist Church
street and number RFD 3 telephone
city, town Seaford state Delaware zip code 19973

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber HD 14 folio 130-133
city, town Cambridge tax map 35 tax parcel 161 tax ID number 01-010387

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

Inventory No. D-754

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Wheatley's Methodist Church stands on the north side of Wheatley's Church Road approximately a mile west of Galestown, Dorchester County, Maryland. The diminutive single-story, gable-front frame church faces south with the gable roof oriented on a north/south axis. Joining the church on the property is a gable roofed frame church hall. Reported to have been built during the late eighteenth century and remodeled in 1879-80 the rectangular frame structure is supported on a minimal brick foundation, and the exterior is sheathed with aluminum siding. The steeply pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

The south (main) façade of this gable-front frame church is defined by a single opening, a double-door entrance that retains heavily molded late nineteenth-century double doors with arched top panels. The entrance is sheltered by a gable roofed hood supported on stick brackets that dates from the early to mid twentieth century. The south elevation is otherwise a plain wall surface other than a wooden lattice-style decoration fixed on the underside of the extended eave.

The east and west elevations are basically alike with a pair of two-over-two colored glass windows evenly spaced across each wall. The north (rear) wall has a gable roofed apse that is marked by narrow colored glass windows on each side. The north wall of the apse is blind.

The interior retains a large degree of original late nineteenth century fabric including pressed metal walls and ceiling. The pressed metal begins above a late twentieth century wood wainscoting. Protruding in the corners of the building are the corner posts which have been covered by later materials. Adjacent to the southern bay windows are additional posts that project into the room and evidently helped to support a gallery that formerly stretched across the south end of the sanctuary. The altar is furnished with a turned baluster altar rail and late nineteenth century altar furniture.

Standing west of the church in the immediate yard is a cast iron bell and cradle set atop low sections of concrete block walls. The bell was cast by C. S. Bell & Company of Hillsboro, Ohio.

Also on the property is a single-story early twentieth century church hall. The rectangular gable-front frame structure is supported on a low brick pier foundation that is covered with pressed metal sheets in the form of rusticated blocks. The exterior of the gable front church hall is sheathed with wood shingles, and the medium pitched gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The windows are replacement six-over-six sash. Attached to the west side of the church hall is a shed roofed wing. Rising on the rear wall is an interior end brick stove chimney.

8. Significance

Inventory No. D-754

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates 1784, 1879, 1907 (Incorporation) **Architect/Builder**

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

evaluated ☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☒ not

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

The history of Wheatley's United Methodist Church west of Galestown dates back to the post Revolutionary War year of 1784, making it the oldest congregation in the Fork election district. While the oral tradition of the congregation dates the extant structure to the time of the congregation's founding, the only possible remnant of that building would be the standing framework, which has internally exposed corner posts that have been covered over by late nineteenth and twentieth century materials. Also indicated by projecting posts is the size and position of a former gallery that stretched across the south end. The Victorian era repairs included a pressed metal interior sheathing that covers the ceiling and a portion of the walls above a late twentieth century application of paneling. The nineteenth century remodeling is referred to in a private letter between George E. Wheatley and Irvin S. R. Wheatley on March 30, 1879, which stated that the congregation decided to repair the old church at that time rather than build a new structure. The colored glass windows and Victorian altar rail and furniture clearly date from that time as well.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Erected on a lot of land bordering the plantations of Edward and Ezekial Wheatley, the church parcel also edged the land of William and Sarah Fletcher, who conveyed any right, title and claim that they had to the property to trustees Laban Jones, Solomon Russell, William Deane, James Fletcher, George Mezsick, Edward Wheatley, Charles Deane, Nathan Bradley & Nathan McCollister in 1798.¹ The terms of the indenture state the bounds of the one-acre lot referencing "Edward Wheatlys Chappell" and the stipulations that

¹ Dorchester County Land Record, HD 14/130-133, Dorchester County Courthouse, Liber and folio citation provided by land researcher Bill Collison, 2.26.2008.

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Inventory No. D-754

Name Wheatley's Methodist Church
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

*The intent and Express purpose of building a Preaching house or Chappell thereon for the use of the Methodist preachers or friendly Clergy of the Church of England and that the said trustees and survivors of them and trustees for the time being do and shall from time to time and all time forever hereafter permit such persons as shall be appointed at the yearly Conference of the people called Methodist Held in America to preach and Expound Gods Holy Word and no others to have and enjoy said premises for the purpose afsd provided always, that the preachers preach no other Doctrine then is contained in Mr. John Wesleys Notes upon the New Testament and four volumes of sermons...*²

The Wheatley's Methodist Episcopal congregation maintained meetings through the nineteenth century, although the denomination changed to a Methodist Protestant persuasion, which is documented by incorporation papers dated to October 1907.³ The trustees at that time were Caleb N. Stack, William E. Dukes, Oliver G. Truitt, William J. Marine, Jesse R. Wheatley, and Rigby W. Wheatley. During the early twentieth century the congregation financed the construction of a single-story church hall on the property but unconnected to the historic building. Over the course of the past twenty years the congregation has dwindled to the point that only commemorative meetings are held occasionally.

² *Ibid*, p. 131.

³ Certificate of Incorporation, 24 October 1907, recorded 11.8.1907, Dorchester County Courthouse, copy provided by Gary Eskridge.

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Name Wheatley's Methodist Church
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

RESEARCH NOTES

Excerpt from Letter by George E. Wheatley to Irvin S. R. Wheatley, March 30, 1879

Dear Sir:

I received your letter the 29 we are all well at time and hope these few lines will find you the Same. It is Saturday knight (sic) it is raining now we have plowed some we sowed 3 ½ bushels of oats we plowed one afternoon with the colt she gose (sic) very well She kicked a little at first we put per to the wagon this afternoon She kicked some we hauld (sic) two loads of slabs from ...?obys....Mill for Lev they are going to Build a new church to Galestown and are going to Repare (sic) old Wheatleys...

From G. E. Wheatley

Articles of Incorporation of Wheatley Methodist Protestant Church, near Galestown, Maryland:

Know all men by these Presents: That the members of the religious society now worshipping as a Methodist Protestant congregation, at near Galestown, Dorchester County, Maryland, over the age of twenty-one years, being desirous of forming a body corporate under the provisions of the Laws of the State of Maryland, at a meeting held for that purpose, pursuant to notice, on the twenty-fourth day of October, in the year nineteen hundred and seven, did elect the following named persons as trustees viz: Caleb N. Stack, William E. Dukes, Oliver G. Truitt, William J. Marine, Jesse R. Wheatley and Rigby W. Wheatley, who together with such Minister as may be for the time being duly appointed, and in charge of said church, are to constitute and form a body corporate by the name of The Trustees of Wheatley Methodist Protestant Church, and as such to have and enjoy all the rights, powers, privileges, and immunities conferred upon such corporations by the Laws of the State of Maryland...

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Name Wheatley's Methodist Church
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

Dorchester County
Land Record
HD 14/130-133

William Fletcher and wife Sarah Fletcher

to

6.2.1798

Laban Jones & Others (Sollomon Russell, William Deane, James Fletcher, George Mezsick, Edward Wheatley, Charles Deane, Nathan Bradley & Nathan McCollister)

...all that part of a tract or parcel of land called Hog yard lying and being in Dorchester County and State afsd. Buted and Bounded as followeth, Beginning at a marked white oak standing near the southwest corned (sic) of the afsd Edward Wheatley Chappell then runs South sixty eight degrees East ten Perches Binding with the afsd William Fletchers Land then North twenty eight Degrees East sixteen perches Binding with the afsd Edward Wheatleys Land and North sixty eight Degrees West ten perches Binding with the said Edward Wheatleys Land then by a straight line binding with Ezekial Wheatleys land to the first Beginning containing one acre of land more or less...Nevertheless upon special trust and confidence and to the intent and Express purpose of building a Preaching house or Chappell thereon for the use of the Methodist preachers or the friendly Clergy of the Church of England and that that the said trustees and survivors of them and trustees for the time being do and shall from time to time and at all time forever hereafter permit such persons as shall be appointed at the yearly Conference of the people called Methodists Held in America to preach and Expound Gods Holy Word and no others to have and enjoy the said premises for the purpose afsd provided always; that the preachers preach no other Doctrine then is contained in Mr. John Wesleys Notes upon the new Testament and four volumes of sermons and upon further trust and confidence that as often as any of these Trustees or the Trustees for the time being shall die or cease to be Members of society called Methodist, the rest of the said Trustees for the time being as soon as conveyantly may be shall and may chuse (sic) another Trustee or Trustees in order to keep the number nine Trustees forever....

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Dorchester County Land Records, various volumes, Dorchester County Courthouse.

E. C. Hallman, *The Garden of Methodism*, The Peninsula Annual Conference, 1948, p. 312.

Personal interview and inspection of interior with Gary Eskridge, 1.29.2008.

Personal e-mail from Bill Collison, researcher, on the location of the tract Hog Yard,, 2.26.2008

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 39,988 square feet

Acreage of historical setting 39,988 square feet

Quadrangle name Sharptown, Md, Quadrangle, 1986 revised Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The metes and bounds of this surveyed property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

11. Form Prepared by

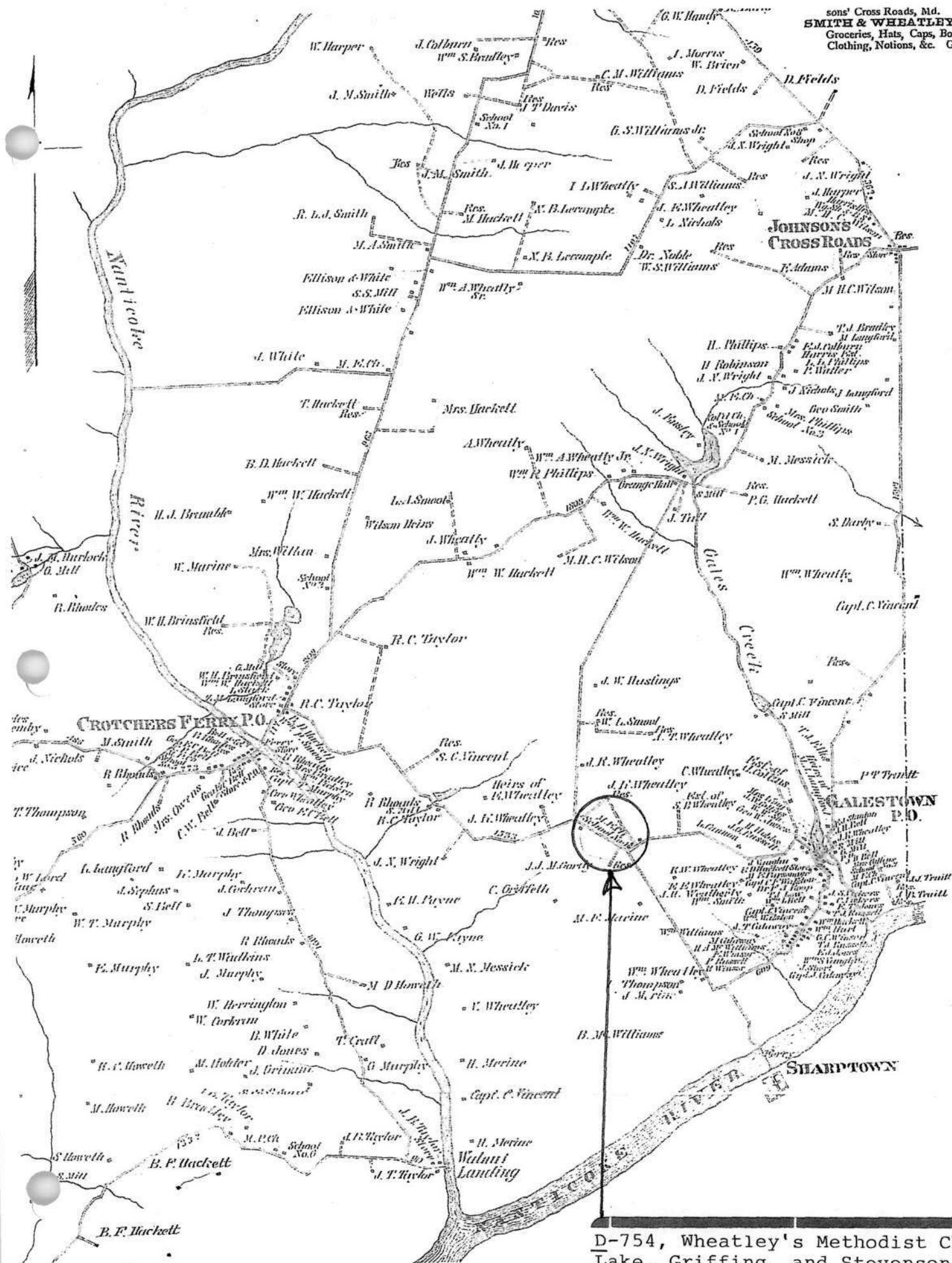
name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Chesapeake Country Heritage & Preservation	date	1/8 & 29/2008
street & number	Cedar Hill, P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

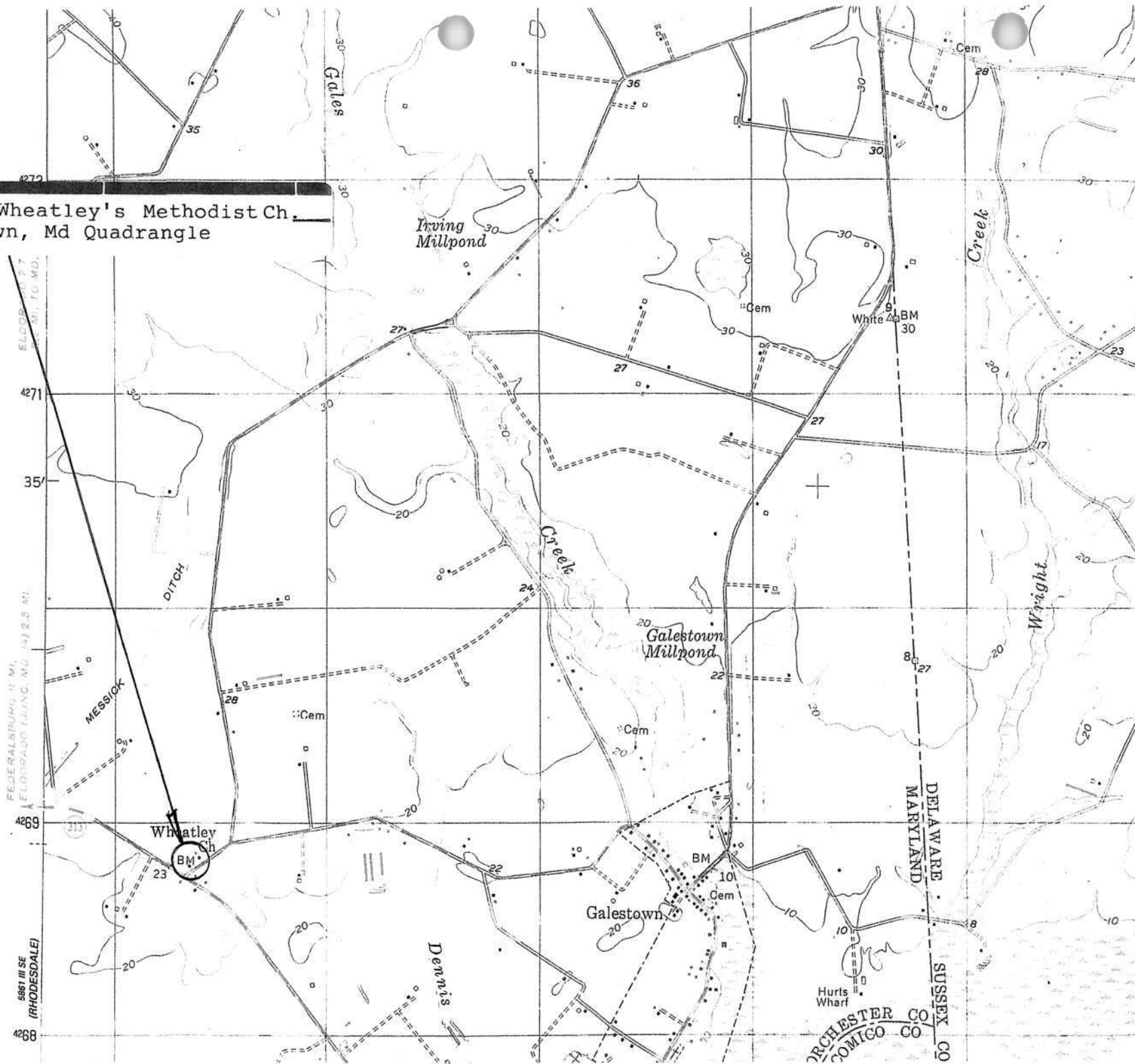
return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

sons' Cross Roads, Md.
SMITH & WHEATLEY, Dealer
 Groceries, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes
 Clothing, Notions, &c. Galestown



D-754, Wheatley's Methodist Church
 Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson-1877

D-754, Wheatley's Methodist Ch.
Sharptown, Md Quadrangle





D-754

Wheatley's Methodist Church
Gazestown Vic, Dorchester Co. Md.
SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

2/08, Pam Tonant, PHOTOGRAPHER
NEH./MD. HISTORICAL TRUST



D-954

WITKATLEY'S METHODIST CH.
GARETOWN VIC.

DIRECTIONS G. and
INTERIOR

2/08, PAUL TOWN, PHOTO.

NZ/MD HISTORICAL TRUST

2/3



D-754

Wheatley's Methodist Church
Galestown, vic, Dorchester Co. Md.
Berl.

2/08, Paul Touart, Photographer
NE4./Md. Historical Trust